

Abraham: Ancestor of Faith (Hebrews 11:8-12)

Today's verses are about the father of faith Abraham or called our ancestor of faith. It means all roots of our faith starts with Abraham.

Life before does not matter. There is no record regarding Abraham till his age of seventy five when God called him. God does not care for our previous life without faith. God cares for workers in the church like servers, elders, cell leaders. And not worldly care people of wealth and honor. Not just anyone becomes believer but only by God's amazing choice. Abraham was a great believer who was chosen by God. Though he was not from prestigious family (his dad Terah who made and sold idols); He was the origin of Judaism, Islam and Christianity. In the bible, God saw his faith, called him as a friend and father of faith. And made him into a great nation and blessed him and his descendants. **"So those who rely on faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith. (Galatians 3:9)** We will be received the same blessings what Abraham received when we have faith as his.

Faith begins with obedience. **"By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going (Hebrew 11:8)** Faith means go forward without knowing where to go but obedience to the word of God. Though we do not know where we are going, to just move (go) without worries. Abraham survived with word and prayer only even in Canaan with famine. There are true/ false faith. How are these revealed? It is when we face adversity, suffering. **"So Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Haran. (Genesis 12:4)** Abraham followed word but Lot followed the world. True faith will overcome adversity v.s. false will give up, become frustrated and desperate. We should look at only Jesus Christ and obey to the voice of God and leave our knowledge or rationality then we will experience miracles.

Faith begins with leaving (setting out) **"The Lord had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you (Genesis 12:1)** Faith means not only be taught or lead christian life but a new voyage with God from worldly life (privilege, relationships...) we have enjoyed and live a new way we never experience - held by God's word. What God wants us to do?.... not to be successful, not great achievement but living with his word.

Faith is personal relationship with God. There are difference between knowing God and personal encounter (relationship). Abraham realized fundamental difference between joy of relationship with God from worldly pleasure. Faith is adventure to offer our whole life to God - he makes us strong and go well as promised. No work of Holy Spirit yet? Because we might not give up anything for faith which will be a path of blessing. We will a path of blessing when we have faith in God. Blessing of God will be poured out through us. In the bible, God made Abraham as a blessing itself. **"I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing (Genesis 12:2)** We are the branches in the vine **"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. (John 15:5)** We will be the path of blessing when we be in Jesus. We should believe it and bless others wherever we are.

Faith means perseverance God's promise would be slow but surely fulfilled **"I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing (Genesis 12:2)** This promise fulfilled slowly through Moses in four hundreds thirty years. Reason why? It is all us. Because we would not change that fast either. Israelites prepared, trained to live by God's word for forty years in the wilderness to live in Canaan.

Faith does not give up Abraham was seventy five when he set out from Haran, resume his life with courage and God gave the calling. Nothing will be late to restart with the bible, it will be not too late nor too soon when God calls us.

What is calling? It is knowing who we are, what to do. Responding God's calling is the ultimate reason of existence, the most noble source of life. All of us were born with God's calling: One responses it's calling, live faithfully according to calling - just live in time goes by. Abraham believed in God before his calling but his life has not changed until hold God's word. No matter we attend worship service regularly or lead religious life, our meaningful time will start when God's word come to us, pierce through our values and identities in the darkness, guide us unexpected path. It will be done by Holy Spirit.

Obedience is the start and also the climax of faith. **"Abraham reasoned that God could even raise the dead, and so in a manner of speaking he did receive Isaac back from death (Hebrews 11:19)** God said to Abraham to sacrifice his own son, Isaac as a burnt offering and he set out for the place God had told him about (Genesis 22) How he could obey though it is not understandable? Abraham believed God's promise that only through Isaac's offspring will be reckoned and God will give him back Isaac even after death. It is obedience beyond our limits. **"Does the Lord delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the Lord? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams. For rebellion is like the sin of divination, and arrogance like the evil of idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, he has rejected you as king. (1 Samuel 15:22-23)"** God most pleased with our obedience. It is more important than offerings (worship). Obedience is to entrust ourselves to God's plan, it is not our obligation but privilege because God always order for our benefit. What is the faith? it is obey to voice of God and not put off, obey till the last firmly and trust on God's hidden plan. There are two categories of people in the bible. One is blessed with obedience (Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Moses, Samuel, David) and the other is cursed with disobedience (Adam, Cain, Korah, Saul, Ananias)

Where/Who are we?